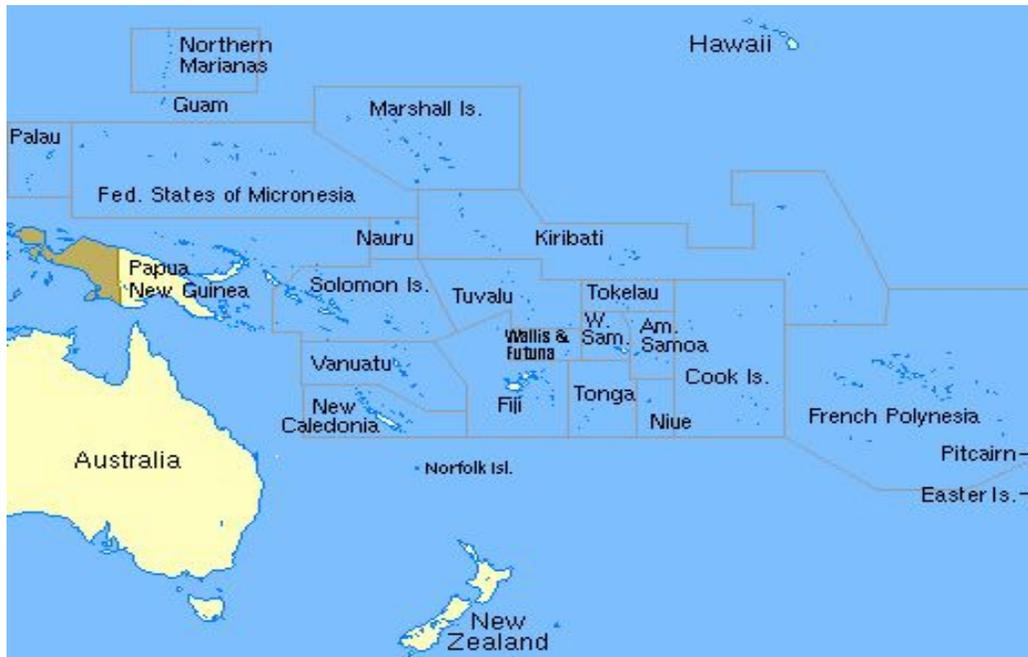


ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH SPECIFIC ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS

Asian Pacific Americans can be broken down into four geographically-based groups: (1) **Pacific Islanders**, mostly Native Hawaiians, Samoans, and Guamanians; (2) **Southeast Asians**, largely comprised of Indochinese from Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Indonesians and Filipinos; (3) **East Asians**, including Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans; and (4) **South Asians**, including those from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tibet, and the Maldives. Though members within the four groups share geographic similarities, they vary greatly in terms of language, history, and culture.

Space limitations prevent discussion of the dozens of ethnic groups from the 50 or more countries of origin of Asian Pacific Americans. This manual focuses on the twelve most populous groups represented in the U.S.

A. PACIFIC ISLANDERS



Map Source: <http://www.pica-org.org/Terms/maps/oceania.jpg>

Overview of Historical Migration

The designation “Pacific Islander” refers to the indigenous people of island groups in the Pacific Ocean, including Fiji, Guam, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau, American and Western Samoa and Tonga. Those born in American Samoa and Guam have U.S. citizenship, as of course do those born in Hawaii.

The widely accepted theory of migration for Pacific Islanders has the first people coming into the area from the Southeast Asian peninsula back when Australia and New Guinea were still linked geographically. The first wave of settlers came to New Guinea and to other islands south of the equator and west of Polynesia. A second wave, with more highly developed cultures, came much later and settled in Indonesia and Micronesia. Other Asian groups followed, including those from the Philippines. Eventually, the descendants of these settlers moved on to Polynesia.

By A.D. 300, movement had expanded to the Tonga-Samoa area, and by about A.D. 1000, to Tahiti. From there, settlers moved on to Hawaii, Easter Island and New Zealand.

General Description of Pacific Islanders

Guamanians

Guamanians are almost 50% Chamorro, descendants of the original Chamorro, who migrated from the Malay Peninsula to the Pacific around 1500 B.C. Other settlers came from Spain, the Philippines, U.S., Great Britain, Korea, China, and Japan. Before World War II, most Guamanians were farmers. After 1947, the largest employer became the U.S. armed forces. The two main contributors to Guam's economy are the U.S. defense efforts and tourism.

English is the official language, with Chamorro taught in primary schools.

Native Hawaiians

The Hawaiian Islands became a U.S. territory in 1893 and the 50th state in 1959.
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Hawaii may be one of the most racially mixed societies in the world today, with elements of white, Japanese, mixed and pure Hawaiian, Filipino, Chinese, black, Korean, and Hispanic peoples.

Native Hawaiian customs and culture were curtailed after the arrival of Europeans and Americans, due to population decrease and missionary efforts to westernize the population. In the past few decades, however, native Hawaiians have been fighting for Hawaiians' rights and the preservation of old traditions.

The music and dance of Hawaii are appreciated worldwide. The sounds of the Hawaiian guitar technique (slack key) and the ukelele are well known, as is the *hula*, the traditional Hawaiian dance. In Hawaii, every Friday is recognized as "Aloha Friday," where, if they choose, women wear *muumuus* (long dresses usually decorated with floral prints) and men wear aloha shirts, even to the office. It is not inconceivable that "Aloha Friday" was the precursor of the widely observed "Casual Friday" dress practice of today.

Most native Hawaiians, and even non-native residents of Hawaii, speak a form of "pidgin" English, incorporating elements of native Hawaiian, English, and other Asian and Pacific languages. For example, a widely used substitute word for whites is *haole* (pronounced ha-oh-leh), the Hawaiian word for "foreigner." In recent years, efforts have intensified to preserve the indigenous Hawaiian language; Hawaiian-language immersion schools have been established for young children, and increasing numbers of college students are studying the language. Several Hawaiian words are used widely in mainstream English, such as *aloha* (hello, goodbye) and *lanai* (porch).

American and Western Samoans

The native Samoans originated from the Malay Peninsula of Southeast Asia. Most Samoans live on the islands of Western Samoa, which is now an independent nation. American Samoa, however, remains under U.S. control.

Samoa is populated with descendants of Polynesians, Europeans, Asians, and Americans. Samoan society emphasizes a close family life, with extended families of two or three generations living together. Groups of families are bound together by a chief, and these chiefs are in turn ruled by higher-ranking village chiefs, or *matai*. Each village also has a princess. Village chiefs are fairly powerful and often rise to national-level politics.

Samoans have adopted many western practices, reflected in their dress, their religion (most Samoans are Christians) and language (English is the official language). Yet they retain vestiges of Samoan tradition, dressing in traditional Samoan clothing for special occasions or cultural festivities, speaking Samoan, and even infusing Christianity with traditional Samoan religious elements.

Notable Figures

Daniel K. Akaka (U.S. Senator), Daniel K. Inouye (U.S. Senator), Keanu Reeves (actor), Hoku Ho (singer, daughter of Don Ho), Brook Mahealani Lee (Miss Universe 1997), Junior Seau (linebacker for the San Diego backers); Greg Louganis (gold-medalist diver at 1984 Olympics).

Example of Organizations

Pacific Islanders' Cultural Association
P.O. Box 31238
San Francisco, California 94131-0238
Phone: (415) 281-0221

For more info on Pacific Islanders, visit
<http://www.sidsnet.org/pacific/usp/~bookcentre/list.htm>

B. CAMBODIAN AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/cb_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

From 1975 to 1994, approximately 163,000 Cambodian refugees made their way to the United States.

The Khmer Rouge, a group of Cambodian communists, aided by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops, began a large-scale insurgency against Cambodian government forces in 1970, quickly gaining control over more than two thirds of the country. The strength of the Khmer Rouge rose dramatically from around 3,000 in 1970 to more than 30,000 in 1973, enabling most of the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops to withdraw. In 1975 the movement, led by Pol Pot overthrew the Cambodian government, establishing "Democratic Kampuchea. Cambodians began immigrating to the United States in large numbers in the mid-1970s, largely triggered by the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam in 1975 and the collapse of governments in Cambodia and Laos.

For the most part, refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos were not welcomed by neighboring Asian countries. Through negotiations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the U.S. and other countries that agreed to

accept the refugees established asylum camps for them in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Hong Kong.

The successful resettlement of these Southeast Asian groups can be largely attributed to the efforts of voluntary agencies (known as “volags”), many associated with church groups, that arranged for sponsorship of the refugees so that they could receive food, clothing, and shelter in their new country. They have settled in just about every state in the U.S., with especially large numbers in California and Texas.

General Description of Cambodian Americans

Cambodian Americans are one of the most youthful Asian Pacific American groups, with a median age of 19.6 years. Adjusting to the American way of life has been difficult for many Cambodians, who come from rural upbringings and have few marketable skills. A generation gap has dichotomized the population, with younger Cambodians born and raised in the U.S. having little understanding of older Cambodians who speak little English and bear emotional scars from the ravages of the Khmer Rouge.

Cambodian Americans cherish the family and tend to have large families. A surprisingly large percentage (20% according to the 1990 Census) of Cambodian families are headed by women. This phenomenon is attributable not to divorce, but to the fact that women outnumber men due to many years of war.

Language

Cambodian, or Khmer, is related to Vietnamese, Mon (a language spoken in Burma and western Thailand), and other tribal languages of Southeast Asia. Unlike other Asian languages such as Vietnamese, which are tonal, Cambodian is not tonal (tones indicate emotion but do not change the meaning of words). The Cambodian alphabet has 47 letters and is derived from the alphabet of ancient India. The Thai and Laotian alphabets are based on the Cambodian alphabet.

Notable Figures

Sichan Siv (Appointed commissioner to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights by President George W. Bush); Haing Ngor (Academy Award winner for Best Supporting Actor in the 1985 film *Killing Fields*).

Example of Organizations

U Care, Inc.
17201 Amity Drive
Rockville, MD 20855
Phone: (301) 519-2366
Fax: (301) 519-9148
CNCnet@aol.com

C. FILIPINO AMERICANS



Map source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/rp_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

The first wave of Filipino immigrants came to the U.S. in the early 1900s, mostly as farm laborers. Many were migrant laborers who wished to make enough money to return home, and few women immigrated, so these early Filipino immigrants were transients and overwhelmingly male.

Say Hello!

Magandang
hapon (Good
afternoon)

The second wave of Filipino immigrants arrived after 1965. Filipinos are now the largest Asian group in the U.S., followed by the Chinese. The second wave of immigrants consisted of professionals such as doctors, scientists, and teachers. More women than men have immigrated recently, and there is now a substantial American-born second generation of Filipinos in the United States.

General Description of Filipino Americans

Almost all Filipinos learned English in school. American ideals and values are also familiar to Filipinos—a result of the fact that the Philippines was once a U.S. territory from 1898-1935.

There is also a Spanish influence in Philippine culture because Spain ruled the Philippines as a colony until 1898. Many Filipinos are Catholics because of this Spanish influence.

Language

English is spoken by the majority of Filipinos since it is taught as a standard second language in Philippine schools. However, Tagalog is the primary language. Filipino is the combination of Tagalog (the original dialect from which most words of Filipino are based), words from local dialects (the Philippines has many dialects such as Ilokano, Kapampangan, and Bisaya), and some borrowed foreign words adapted into the language.

Notable Figures

Loida Lewis (Chair/CEO, TLC Beatrice International), Dean Devlin (film producer/screenwriter “Independence Day” and “Godzilla”), Tia Carrere (actress - “Wayne’s World”), Jocelyn Enriquez (singer and dancer), Lou Diamond Phillips (actor- “La Bamba”).

Example of Organizations

National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA)
1444 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 986-9330

D. HMONG AMERICANS

Overview of Immigration

The Hmong in the U.S. came mainly from Laos as refugees after the Vietnam War. They were recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to fight in the once-secret wars in Laos. Upon the collapse of the U.S.-supported Laotian government, the new government marked the Hmong for genocidal extinction. Many of the Hmong fled from invaders and from chemical weapons, losing many lives as they traveled through the jungle and swam the Mekong River to Thailand.

While serving in special guerrilla units during the Vietnam War, between 10,000 and 20,000 Hmong men, women and children were killed, and more than 100,000 fled to Thai refugee camps.

A large proportion of the Hmong who found their way to refugee camps in Thailand endured harsh living conditions for months and, in many instances, years before being resettled in a third country. By far the largest number came to the United States, with smaller numbers going to France, Australia, and Canada.

Thousands of Hmong spent years in Thai refugee camps. Unlike the 130,000 Vietnamese who were evacuated in late April 1975 by the Americans and allowed into the United States under the "parole" power of the U.S. Attorney General, the Hmong and other ethnic groups from Laos did not win that privilege until December 1975, when Congress admitted 3,466 Hmong under parole. By the early 1980s, some 50,000 Hmong had been resettled in the United States.

General Description of Hmong Americans

There are roughly 160,000 Hmong people in the U.S., largely concentrated in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and California. To avoid overburdening any single locality and to encourage the refugees to learn English as quickly as possible, the federal government followed a policy of dispersing the refugees among communities across the face of the nation.

Several million Hmong people remain in China, Thailand, and Laos, speaking a variety of Hmong dialects.

According to the Lao Human Rights Council, a nonprofit group based in Wisconsin:

1. In 1998, there were approximately 50,000 Hmong Americans and refugees in Minnesota, and about 40,000 Hmong Americans and refugees in Wisconsin.
2. About 20,000 Hmong Americans and immigrants moved from California to Minnesota, Wisconsin, and other states in 1998.
3. About 80,000 Hmong still lived in California in 1998.

4. About 30,000 Hmong lived in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Colorado, Washington, Kansas, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Michigan, Missouri and other states in this country in 1998.
5. About 3,000 Hmong lived in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and 1,000 in Menomonie, Wisconsin, in 1998.

Language

Hmong is a monosyllabic, tonal language (7-12 tones, depending on the dialect), with features that may make it an important bridge (according to some people) between Thai, Burmese, Chinese, and other Austro-Asian languages. The Hmong language may have some local variations or dialects which are specific to a region or tribal group. However, this linguistic difference in intonation and vocabulary is generally small so that Hmong from different regions can generally understand each other.

Notable Figures

Joe Bee Xiong (D), former Eau Claire (WI) City Councilmember.

Example of Organizations

Hmong National Development
1326 18th Street, NW #200A
Washington, DC 20003
Phone: (202) 463-2118

If you want to learn more about the Hmong, visit or click on the following links:

<http://i.am/hmong>

"Forgotten Soldiers" is a lengthy article by Susan M. Barbieri, staff writer, in the St. Paul Pioneer Press, Sunday, May 1, 1994, Page 1A.

Tragic Mountains: The Hmong, the Americans, and the Secret Wars for Laos, 1942-1992, by Jane Hamilton-Merritt (Indiana University Press, 1993).

Dark Sky, Dark Land: Stories of the Hmong Boy Scouts of Troop 100, by David L. Moore, Tessera Publishing, Inc., Eden Prairie, Minnesota, 1989; 191 pages.

Hmong : History of a People: Keith Quincy, 244 pages 2nd edition (October 1997) Eastern Washington University Press.

I Begin My Life All Over : The Hmong and the American Immigrant Experience, Ghia Xiong (Contributor), Lillian Faderman, 288 pages (April 1999)
Beacon Press.

<http://members.aol.com/hmongstudiesjrn/>

Hmong.com

HmongNet.Org

E. LAOTIAN AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/la_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

In 1975, in accordance with the Paris Peace Agreement on Indochina of January 27, 1973, the United States withdrew its troops and advisers from Laos, South Vietnam, and Cambodia. The North Vietnamese government took over South Vietnam by invasion with armed forces. The Khmer Rouge regime took over Cambodia. The Communist movement, financed and supported by the North Vietnamese and Russian governments, took over Laos by invasion with armed forces and formed the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Between 1975 and 1995, the Communist government killed over 300,000 people in Laos. The victims include the royal Lao family, government officials, civil servants, military personnel, ranking military generals, and their associates and family members. The "Killing Fields" of Laos, the chemical bombings, tortures, and genocidal murders, massacres, and executions created the Laotian refugee crisis, refugee camps in Thailand, and the spread of Laotian refugees around the world.

Laotians began immigrating to the United States in large numbers in the mid-1970s. From 1975 to 1994, approximately 263,000 Laotian refugees made their way to the United States.

General Description of Laotian Americans

In 1990, of the 171,577 people of Laotian descent in the United States, approximately 96% lived in urban areas.

Although not the case for Laotians in their native country, Laotian Americans live predominantly in urban areas. Laotian Americans have retained many of the cultural ties to their native country. Preeminent among these is the practice of Buddhism. Even if individual Laotian Americans do not practice Buddhism, its philosophy is heavily relied upon as a model for behavior. Laotian Americans are also known for the familiar way in which they treat one another. They live in close knit communities and keep close tabs on developments in each other's lives. It is perfectly acceptable to address one another by first rather than last names. For example, "Khamsang Phoumvihane" would be respectfully addressed as "Mr. Khamsang" rather than "Mr. Phoumvihane."

Language

Lao is a tonal language, which means that the meaning of a word is changed by the tone or pitch at which it is said. In standard Lao, there are six tones: low, mid, high, rising, high falling, and low falling. The Lao alphabet is phonetic, meaning each Lao letter stands for a sound. Lao writing has 27 consonant symbols and 38 vowel symbols. The Lao alphabet is derived from the Khmer or Cambodian alphabet, which in turn was developed from an ancient Indian alphabet. All Lao words end in a vowel or in a consonant sound similar to the English "k," "p," "t," "m," "n," or "ng." This is why some Laotian Americans who learn English as a second language may occasionally pronounce "fish" as "fit" or "stiff" as "stip."

Example of Organizations

Lao Human Rights Council, Ins.
P.O. Box 1606
Eua Claire, Wisconsin 54702
Phone: (715) 831-8355
Fax: (715) 831-8563

For more information on Laotians, visit:
www.earthlink.net/~laohumrights
www.kashrus.org

F. THAI AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/th_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

Unlike other Southeast Asians, most Thais immigrated by choice, rather than as political refugees.

Thais began to immigrate to the U.S. in large numbers after 1960. During that time, U.S. forces began to have a sizable presence in Thailand due to the Vietnam War. By the 1970s, about 5,000 Thais had immigrated to the U.S. at a ratio of three women to one man. The majority of these marriages occurred when men of the U.S. Air Force stationed in Thailand married Thai nationals. By 1980, concentrations of Thai people had formed around various Air Force bases, as well as other military installations such as Army bases. The largest concentrations of Thai Americans can be found in California, Texas, and New York.

General Description of Thai Americans

Thai American communities are tightly knit and resemble social networks of their native country. Generally, Thais do not shake hands when they meet. Instead they greet each other by keeping their elbows at their sides and putting their palms together at chest level in a prayer-like gesture called *wai*. Thais consider the feet to be the lowest part of the body, both physically and spiritually. Thais consider pointing at something with one's feet to be the epitome of bad manners. The head is regarded as the highest part of the body; out of respect, Thais do not touch each other on the head.

Language

Thai is one of the oldest languages in East or Southeast Asia. Some anthropologists believe it may even predate Chinese. The two languages share similarities in that they are monosyllabic tonal languages. There are only 420 phonetically different words in Thai, so a single syllable can have multiple meaning, depending on the tone in which it is expressed. Meanings are determined by five different tones – high, low, level, falling, or rising. For example, depending on inflection, the syllable “mai” can mean “widow,” “silk,” “burn,” “wood,” “new,” “not?” or “not.” The signs of the alphabet are derived from Sanskrit.

Notable Figures

Tiger Woods (golfer)

Examples of Organizations

Thai Community Development Center
6376 Yucca Street, Suite B
Los Angeles CA, 90028
Phone: (323) 468-2555
Fax: (323) 461-4488

Thai American Young Professionals Association
www.taypa.org

G. VIETNAMESE AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/vm_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

Vietnam, located South of China on the Indochina peninsula, was occupied by the Chinese for 1,000 years (11 B.C.-A.D. 939), followed by 900 years of independence under 8 different dynasties (A.D. 939-1883), and then by 70 years of French colonial rule (1883-1945). After World War II, Vietnam experienced 30 years of almost continuous warfare. From 1946 to 1954, the nationalist Vietminh headed by Ho Chi Minh fought for control over the newly created Democratic Republic of Vietnam against the French, who withdrew militarily following the *Geneva Accords*, which partitioned the country along the 17th parallel. The Communist North Vietnamese waged guerilla warfare against the anti-Communist South Vietnamese in an effort to reunify the country.

Say Hello!
Chao Ong,
Chao Ba
(good day,
sir, good
day,
ma'am)

By the time the U.S. pulled out of Vietnam in 1975, it is estimated that the war had cost 50,000 American lives and 3,000,000 Vietnamese lives. Over 5,000,000 Vietnamese became refugees.

Prompted by fears that a North Vietnamese victory would lead to further Communist takeovers in Southeast Asia, the United States sent military advisers to Vietnam in 1962 followed by combat troops in 1965. In 1973, the U.S. involvement in Vietnam came to an end when it signed the Paris Peace Treaty. Weakened by U.S. troop withdrawals, the South Vietnamese Army was not able to stop the North Vietnamese from driving further south.

On April 30, 1975, Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, fell to North Vietnamese hands.

The first wave of 130,000 refugees (roughly 125,000 of them Vietnamese) left Southeast Asia in the spring of 1975. They were first airlifted by the U.S. government to the Philippines and Guam and then to one of the refugee centers in the United States (Fort Chaffee, Arkansas; Camp Pendleton, California; Eglin Air Base, Florida; or Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania).

This group included dependents of U.S. servicemen and those with sponsors already living in the United States. The second wave of Vietnamese refugees began during 1978 and lasted through the mid-1980s. These were the “boat people,” who took to sea in rickety, overcrowded boats. Those who escaped death by drowning or at the hands of pirates ended up in camps in Southeast Asia or Hong Kong; others traveled by a dangerous land route through Cambodia to Thailand. This group included many ethnic Chinese who were persecuted by the Vietnamese government, as well as Vietnamese who faced being sent to reeducation camps or forced evacuation to the “new economic zones” in the countryside.

In response to the well-publicized plight of the “boat people,” the Vietnamese government agreed to establish the Orderly Departure Program under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, enabling people to leave Vietnam legally for family reunion and humanitarian reasons.

General Description of Vietnamese Americans

The approximately 130,000 Vietnamese who came to the United States in 1975 following the fall of Saigon differed from the later groups in significant ways. They were generally better educated and wealthier, had better facility with English and in many cases, had military, political or corporate ties to U.S. citizens. The second wave of Vietnamese immigrants consisted largely of ethnic Chinese who became increasingly persecuted in Vietnam when China became Vietnam's adversary in its hostilities with Cambodia. These "boat people" were mainly fishermen, peasant farmers, and small business owners with limited education and few skills that were transferable to their new lives. This second group had a far more difficult time adjusting to life in the United States.

Interestingly, besides these two major waves of immigration, there has been significant migration of Vietnamese Americans within the United States. The successful resettlement of Vietnamese, like that of other Southeast Asian groups, can be largely attributed to the efforts of *volags* (see Laotian, Cambodian, and Hmong sections above), voluntary agencies often associated with church groups. *Volags* located sponsors who helped provide food, clothing, and shelter for the refugees as they settled in their new country. Initially, refugees moved to wherever they had a sponsor. Often these sponsors were found in areas near the original resettlement camps such as Arkansas, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Maine, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Washington. In pursuit of family reunification, better jobs, Vietnamese community support networks, and better climates, many Vietnamese moved to urban areas, concentrating themselves mostly in California and Texas.

For more information on Vietnamese, go to <http://www.vietnampeople.net/>

Language

Vietnamese is a monosyllabic language having six tones, which give the language a sing-song effect. A word can be repeated with any one of six tones to indicate six different meanings. Vietnamese has three basic dialects, all of which are generally understood by most Vietnamese speakers. The language is very different from English; verbs do not change forms, articles are not used, nouns do not have plural endings, there are no prefixes, no suffixes, no definitives, and no distinctions among pronouns. Many refugees of the first wave are bilingual. Older urban people may speak some French, and those who had government jobs in South Vietnam speak some English, or are even fluent.

Notable Figures

Viet Dinh (Assistant Attorney General for Legal Policy under President George W. Bush); Dustin Nguyen (actor-"21 Jump Street").

Examples of Organizations

Southeast Asian Resource Action Center (SEARAC)

1628 16th Street, NW 3rd floor

Washington, DC 20009

Phone: (202) 667-4690

H. CHINESE AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/ch_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

Up to the 1940s, the Chinese population in the U.S. was two-thirds male because of the exclusionary immigration laws that existed for about 50 years. It was not until the late 1950s and early 1960s that the Chinese middle class started emerging, fueled by more educated and skilled immigrants. For more information about Chinese immigration patterns and a description of Chinese Americans, please see “*Emerging Together- In Celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*” segment.

Say Hello!

“Ni How”
(say Knee
How)

Contributions of Chinese Americans

Since the first recorded Chinese immigrant arrived in the United States in 1820, Chinese Americans have made significant contributions to the American way of life. As described in sections III and IV of the “*Emerging Together- In Celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*” segment, Chinese workers were a major labor force in building the industrial and agricultural foundations of the West. They worked in factories and coalmines and built roads, railroads, levees, and dams. By the late 1870s,

the Chinese played a significant role providing labor to develop strawberry farming in California. The Bing cherry got its name from Ah Bing, a Chinese employee of Seth Lewelling, who developed the new type of cherry in 1875. In 1888, Florida farmer Lue Gin Gong produced a hardy orange that could withstand the frost and heat of Florida; the orange was awarded a medal by the U.S. Department of Education.

Probably the best-known contribution of the early Chinese immigrants is their role in building the transcontinental railroad. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 12,000 Chinese carved tunnels and laid track across the Sierra Nevadas. Approximately 1,200 of them were killed in the process, either by severe winters or while handling explosives. For more information about Chinese immigration, see "*Emerging Together- In Celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*" segment.

After the passage of the Naturalization and Immigration Act of 1965 which eliminated the anti-immigration laws, the number of Chinese immigrating to the United States increased dramatically. Because of the diaspora after the Communist takeover of China in 1949, Chinese who immigrated to the United States could hail from any country in Asia. However, the large majority of Chinese in the United States are most likely from Taiwan, Hong Kong or the People's Republic of China. There are also significant Chinese populations in countries such as the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam. Some of those overseas Chinese have also immigrated to the United States.

The later Chinese immigrants made their marks in other fields. Here are just a few examples. In 1926, Alice Fong Yu became the first Chinese American teacher at a public school. Her accomplishment was remarkable, since she had at first been refused admission to a teacher's college because of her race. The 1957 Nobel Prize for physics was won by two Chinese Americans, Chen Ning Yang and Tsung Dao Lee. Hiram Fong became the first Chinese American elected to Congress; he won election as the senator from Hawaii in 1959. Dr. Chao Hao Li won the prestigious Albert Lasker Medical Research Award in 1962; he was a leading authority on the pituitary gland. Thomas Tang of Arizona was appointed to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1977. In 1990, Dr. Chang Lin-Tien was appointed Chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley, one of the largest universities in the United States. Michael Chang was the youngest tennis player to win the French Open. Michelle Kwan won a silver medal in the 1998 Winter Olympics. Dr. David Ho, AIDS researcher, became Time's Man of the Year in 1996. Elaine Chao became the first Asian Pacific American woman in the U.S. Cabinet when she was appointed Secretary of Labor by President George W. Bush in 2001.

Language

The Chinese have about 2,000 dialects, but the most common languages are Mandarin, Cantonese and Fujianese. The written form is the same for all Chinese, with simplified characters for those from the People's Republic of China.

Notable Figures

Yo-Yo Ma (cellist); Dr. David Ho (AIDS researcher, Time's Man of the Year); I.M. Pei (architect); Amy Tan (author); Elaine Chao (Secretary of Labor under President George W. Bush); Joan Chen (actress); Charles Wang (CEO, Computer Associates); Jerry Yang (co-founder of Yahoo!); Vera Wang (fashion designer); Gary Locke (Washington Governor); Michael Chang (tennis champion); Michelle Kwan (Olympic figure skater); Maxine Hong Kingston (author); Lucy Liu (actress); David Wu (Congressman from Oregon and Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus); David Henry Hwang (Tony Award-winning playwright).

Examples of Organizations

Organizations of Chinese Americans
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW #601
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 223-5500

Committee of 100
677 5th Avenue, 3rd floor
New York, New York, 10022
Phone: (212) 371-6565

I. JAPANESE AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/ja_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

The majority of the Japanese who immigrated to the United States in the 1800s were laborers who worked on the plantations in Hawaii, California and other parts of the West. The Immigration Act of 1924 halted immigration from Japan, and the 1952 McCarran Walter Act allowed only a trickle of new Japanese immigration.

The defining experience for the Japanese American community was the World War II incarceration. Due to wartime conflict with Japan, 120,000 Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps in California, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, and Arkansas. After the war, Japanese Americans were widely dispersed across the country, and they became integrated and assimilated into American society relatively quickly. More than 50 years after the war ended, Japanese Americans were able to convince Congress to apologize for the internment and provide reparations for those who had been incarcerated.

For a more detailed discussion of Japanese Americans' immigration history, please see sections III and IV of the "*Emerging Together- In Celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*" segment.

Language

Three categories of words exist in Japanese. The native Japanese words constitute the largest category, followed by words originally borrowed from China in earlier history, and the smallest but rapidly growing category of words borrowed in modern times from Western languages such as English. This third category also contains a small number of words that have come from other Asian languages.

Japanese has an open-syllable sound pattern, so that most syllables end in a vowel -- the syllable may be composed solely of the vowel. Unlike English, which has stress accent, Japanese has pitch accent, which means that after an accented syllable, the pitch falls. The word for "chopsticks," hashi, has the accent on the first syllable, so its pitch contour is ha shi. Without the accent on the first syllable, hashi may mean another word.

Japanese is traditionally written vertically, with the lines starting from the right side of the page. While this way of writing is still predominant, there is another way that is identical to English in starting from the top left hand side, with each line written horizontally.

Notable Figures

Kristi Yamaguchi (figure skater); Daniel K. Inouye (senator); Norman Y. Mineta (Secretary of Transportation under President George W. Bush and Secretary of Commerce under President Bill Clinton); George Takei (Star Trek actor); Josie Natori (fashion designer).

Example of Organizations

The Japanese American Citizens League
1765 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
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J. KOREAN AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/ks_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

Korean Americans are one of the fastest growing Asian ethnic groups in the country. The pioneers of the Korean community in the U.S. were a small group of exiles and immigrant laborers who arrived at the turn of the century. Between 1903 and 1907, approximately 7,000 Korean immigrants settled in Hawaii and California. The exiles consisted mainly of political and social reformers who left Korea after a failed coup d'état in 1884. The majority of the early immigrants were laborers who were recruited to work in the sugar cane fields. They were a fresh source of cheap labor to meet the shortage caused by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Due to the occupation of Korea by Japan in 1905, Japan assumed jurisdiction over its foreign relations. The Japanese, not wanting the Koreans to compete with Japanese labor in Hawaii, halted Korean immigration to the U.S. with the exception of Korean women. The Japanese occupation of Korea fueled the nationalism of Korean patriots who lived in the U.S.

Korea achieved liberation from Japan in 1945. Syngman Rhee, with U.S. backing, returned to a newly independent Korea to participate in its postwar reconstruction. In 1948, Rhee was elected president of the Republic of Korea and he ruled Korea until he was ousted by a student revolution in 1960.

American involvement in the Korean War in the 1950s brought the second wave of Korean immigration --- wives of American servicemen and war orphans adopted by American families. Starting in the early 1950s, there was an increasing number of Korean students who came to the United States to study and Korean doctors who trained at U.S. hospitals. The post-1965 immigration brought the third wave of Korean immigrants, this time close relatives of citizens or permanent residents. Unlike the Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos, large numbers of Koreans were able to emigrate to the U.S. as families rather than as individuals.

General Description of Korean Americans

Given the demographic pattern of family immigration, the post-1965 population of Korean Americans is usually identified as first (*il-se*), one-point-five (*il-jom-o-se*), or second (*i-se*) generation. The first generation consists of adult immigrants, one-point-five are their children, and second generation describes those born in the United States. Given the close proximity of these generations, Korean Americans have had to confront intergenerational differences related to identity, culture, and language more acutely than Asian ethnic groups who came much earlier.

Although Koreatowns took root in Los Angeles and other cities, Korean Americans for the most part have not lived in ethnic enclaves as had the earlier Japanese and Chinese immigrants. Without a geographic concentration, Korean American communities tend to revolve around associations – churches, business and professional associations, alumni organizations, civic groups, and Korean media.

Many Korean Americans go into business for themselves. Chances are, the dry cleaner, convenience store, or deli in your neighborhood is owned by a Korean American. Korean American immigrants often pool their resources to help one another financially. In this system, known as *ke*, several families or friend contribute to a pool of money. Each participant then takes turns dipping into the pool in times of financial need. This system enables many families to start a small business or support a child's first year of college without resorting to bank loans.

Language

The Korean language belongs to the Ural-Altaic group, which relates Korean to an assortment of languages in countries around the world, such as Mongolian, Turkish, and Finnish. Hangul, the Korean alphabet, was invented in the 15th century. Until then, Koreans used Chinese characters for writing. In 1446, a group of royal scholars developed the Korean phonetic alphabet, composed of 10 vowels and 14 consonants, in an effort to make literacy more widespread among Koreans.

Notable Figures

Syngman Rhee (founder and first president of the Republic of Korea); Margaret Cho (comedian and actress); Rick Yune (actor); Jhoon Rhee (Tae Kwon Do Grandmaster).

Examples of Organizations

Korean American Coalition
9562 Garden Grove Boulevard, Suite R
Garden Grove, CA 92844
Phone: (714) 590-6123

National Korean American Service and Education Consortium
50-16 Parsons Blvd.
Flushing, New York, 11355
Phone: (718) 445-3939

K. ASIAN INDIANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/in_map.htm

Say Hello!

In Hindi
(national
language of
India):
“Namaste.”

Overview of Immigration

Asian Indians are the largest South Asian group in the United States. They first came to the United States in the late 1800s. The majority were professional men, merchants, and travelers who settled primarily in New York or elsewhere in the East Coast. Around the same time, many Asian Indians came to the U.S. as college students. The second wave of Indian immigration, starting in 1905, consisted mostly of agricultural workers from the northwest Indian province of Punjab. The majority of these workers were Sikhs, members of a religious sect in India. First, they went to Canada as contract laborers, but when immigration restrictions were imposed by the Canadian government, some made their way south of the border to Washington and Oregon. Like the Chinese, Indian immigrants found employment in the railroads and lumber mills.

As discussed in sections III and IV of the “*Emerging Together- In Celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*” segment, a series of anti-immigration laws were passed to halt immigration from Japan, China, India, and Korea in response to anti-Asian sentiment. As a result, the population of all these groups experienced a decline during the early and mid-1900s. The decline in Asian Indian population accelerated in the 1920s after the passage of the Immigration Act of 1917 and again after World War II.

By that time, the population had dwindled to approximately 2,500 people. Of these, the majority were laborers.

Post-1965 immigration effectively changed the face of the immigration stream from an uneducated, rural people to those who were professionally and technically trained. Many of the newcomers were students. Under the law, students could shift their status to permanent resident, especially if they were in occupations that were needed for economic growth, such as engineering, medicine, and management.

Other middle-class, educated Asian Indians came to the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a means to enhance their lives. Many arrived in New York City and settled there. Eventually, as they became more prosperous, they moved to affluent suburban areas in New Jersey and Long Island. As these communities developed, Asian Indians used the family clause in the new immigration law to bring over their relatives who were less educated and had different skills. By 1970, the Asian Indian community had taken root in New York and New Jersey, where the majority of Asian Indians can be found today.

General Description of Asian Indians

As previously mentioned, post-1965 immigration allowed a rapid increase of Asian Indian immigrants. Large waves of Indian professionals seeking educational and employment flocked to the United States. Skilled and qualified, their ranks included physicians, engineers, and post-secondary teachers. Because of the predominance of professionals in this wave of immigration, Asian Indians have become one of the most economically successful Asian immigrant groups in America. Their mean family income is \$59,777 – the highest of any Asian immigrant group in the United States and 25% higher than the national average. Census data for 1990 also indicate that 87.5% of Indian immigrants have a high school degree. More than 57% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Though Indians constitute less than half of 1% of the U.S. population as a whole, they make up over 5% of scientists, engineers, and software specialists.

A second wave of immigration following the 1984 Family Reunification Act brought large numbers of the first group's relatives to the United States. These lower-middle class Indians became owners of family-run motels, grocery stores, gas stations, and other service businesses. According to the Asian American Hotel Owners Association, 7,200 Indian owners operated 12,500 of the United States' 28,000 budget hotels and motels in 1994. In addition, more than 40% of New York City's 40,000 licensed Yellow Cab drivers are Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis.

Although immigration data have been available for decades, the U.S. decennial census did not enumerate the Asian-Indian population separately from a miscellaneous category of "other Asians" until 1980. Furthermore, the population fluctuates as temporary residents arrive and leave as students, management trainees, and visiting technology specialists. As of 1990, however, the Asian Indian population in the United States numbered 815,000, up 111% from 387,000 in 1980.

Language

The Indian subcontinent consists of a number of separate linguistic communities, each of which shares a common language and culture. The people of India speak many languages and dialects, which are mostly varieties of about 15 principal languages.

Some Indian languages have a long literary history--Sanskrit literature is more than 5,000 years old and Tamil 3,000. India also has some languages that do not have written forms. There are 18 officially recognized languages in India.

Hindi is a direct descendant of Sanskrit through Prakrit and Apabhramsha. It has been influenced and enriched by Dravidian, Turkish, Farsi, Arabic, Portuguese, and English. More than 180 million people in India regard Hindi as their mother tongue. Another 300 million use it as a second language.

Notable Figures

Har Gobind Khorana (1968 Nobel Prize winner for Medicine and Physiology); Dalip Singh Saund (first Asian American elected to the Congress); Subrahmanyam Chandrasekhar (1983 Nobel Prize winner for physics); Dinesh D'Souza (writer and political analyst); Zubin Mehta (musical conductor and director); Ravi Shankar (musician).

Examples of Organizations

Indian American Center for Political Awareness
1735 New York Avenue, NW
Washington D.C. 20006
Phone: (202) 628-3353

Indian American Bar Association of D.C.
P.O. Box 65227
Washington, DC 20035
www.iabanet.org/dc/index/html

L. PAKISTANI AMERICANS



Map Source: http://www.weatherhub.com/global/pk_map.htm

Overview of Immigration

Pakistan was created in 1947 with the partition of British India into two separate states. The history of Pakistani immigration to the United States is closely linked to the overall South Asian immigration to the United States, since Pakistan did not come into being until 1947. Pakistanis, mostly college students, took advantage of the post-1965 easing of immigration policy and flocked to the United States. This has resulted in a “brain drain” in Pakistan, especially in the case of medical doctors who have a much higher earning potential in the United States than in their native Pakistan.

General Description of Pakistani Americans

According to the 1990 Census, there are approximately 750,000 Pakistani Americans in the United States. The largest concentration is in New York, California, Texas, and Chicago metropolitan areas. Like Asian Indians, the majority of Pakistani Americans can be found in the Northeast.

A significant number of Pakistani Americans are highly educated and many immigrated at the time when there was a shortage of engineers, doctors, scientists, and teachers in the United States. As with Asian Indians, Pakistani immigrants in the 1990s included more lower-middle class, less educated immigrants. They often found employment as taxi drivers or small business owners. Gas stations and newsstands, particularly in New York City, are popular businesses for the new wave of Pakistani immigrants.

Language

Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. English is widely spoken in business and government circles. The dominant local language is Punjabi, which is spoken by 65% of the people. It is also the dominant language for Pakistani immigrants to the U.S. Like the Asian Indians, their linguistic adjustment in America has been easier than other Asian ethnic groups because English is widely spoken in Pakistan.

Examples of Organizations

Council of Pakistan American Affairs
895 Holly Glen Drive
Long Beach, California 90815
mshahmd@aol.com

For more information about Pakistani Americans, see <http://www.pakistanlink.com/>